



Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission Meeting Notes

**August 25, 2008 – 1:00 – 5:30 p.m.
August 26, 2008 – 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Comfort Suites – Granary Room
11167 Hickman Road, Urbandale, IA**

Commission Members Present:

Major General Dardis, Commission Chairman, Johnston
Bill Bywater, Iowa City
Jim Davis, Charles City
Mike Earley, Des Moines (Tuesday only)
Jim Fausett, Coralville
Bill Gerhard, Des Moines
Karris Golden, Waterloo (Monday only)
Brent Halling, Perry
Mike King, Creston
Linda Larkin, Fort Madison
Nitza Lopez-Castillo, Columbus Junction
Carroll Reasoner, Cedar Rapids
Amy Truax, Parkersburg
Mark Wandro, Ankeny
Beverly Wharton, Sioux City

Welcome and Opening Comments

Review of the Goals and Outcomes of the Task Force Sessions and the Work of the Commission

Major General Ron Dardis, Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission (RIAC) Chairman, welcomed all RIAC Commissioners to the meeting. Maj. Gen. Dardis expressed thanks to the members for their time and commitment. The Commission has met and toured all across Iowa, including holding Speak Up Iowa! public input sessions and setting up a booth at the State Fair. The goals of the Commission's 45-Day Report are intended to prioritize short-term goals. The Task Forces were charged with compiling damage assessments, identifying unmet needs and gaps, and developing short-term recommendations.

Maj. Gen. Dardis explained that the Commission will have the opportunity at this meeting to discuss the issues and set its own priorities. Tom Slater and Arlinda McKeen of State Public Policy Group will facilitate this afternoon session of the RIAC and help the Commission through its discussions. There have emerged common themes among the Task Forces and today's discussions will help the Commission determine what needs to be addressed most immediately.

The Commission will meet again Tuesday morning, August 26, to finalize the recommendations to be included in the RIAC's 45-Day Report. The final deadline for the RIAC Report is September 2. This is the Commission's opportunity as an Advisory Commission to exchange

ideas and discuss the issues so the Commission members may come to a consensus. Maj. Gen. Dardis noted that he was looking forward to an interesting discussion.

Discussion of Task Force Work and Outcomes

McKeen and Slater introduced themselves, explained the goals of the day's discussions, and thanked the Commission members and Task Force participants for their time volunteered to this project. McKeen asked the Commission members to introduce themselves, including their personal goals for the end of this session.

Mark Wandro stated that the Commission's goals are to go out and assess damages, determine gaps, and seek solutions for rebuilding.

Brent Halling introduced himself as a Perry farmer and former deputy secretary of Agriculture, and that he chaired the Agriculture and Environment Task Force. The Commission needs to determine priorities and identify immediate needs and then move on to longer-term fixes. The Commission must identify immediate needs before the cold weather starts.

Mike King, Union County Supervisor and President of the State Association of Counties, stated that the Commission needed to agree on its goals and make sure that legislators and the people of Iowa recognize the hardships that have come about due to the disasters. Iowa's legislators must have the first-hand knowledge to make important decisions in the following months.

Bill Bywater of Iowa City chaired the Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation Task Force. He stated that financing will be a big issue and that the RIAC must drive the Legislature to action, as well as others at all levels. There has to be a united effort to bring Iowa back.

Amy Truax of Parkersburg noted that the Rebuild Iowa Task Forces have done a lot of research and now it is time for the Commission to come together and discuss solutions.

Bill Gerhard, chair of the Economic and Workforce Development Task Force, stated that the Commission needed to undertake outreach that says Iowa is open for business. Iowa does a good job at recruiting new companies, and the Commission cannot forget Iowa's successes as it looks to immediate and long-term needs.

Linda Larkin, chair of the Public Health and Health Care Task Force, explained that it was her hope that the Commission would develop clear, concise ideas that are, maybe, a little out of the box. The Commission really needs to embrace what must be done and set forth some clear action items.

Maj. Gen. Ron Dardis, Commission Chairman, agreed with previous comments. This disaster is one of incredible proportions. In Cedar Rapids, 1,300 city blocks have been affected. If the Commission is effective, it is his belief that this is an opportunity for the state to move forward and do some things differently. Maj. Gen. Dardis shared with the group that he remains focused because of his personal experiences through this process.

Jim Davis, from Charles City, said that since June 8th he has been eating and breathing this work. Davis served on the Housing Task Force with Lopez-Castillo, and said that they came up with a number of immediate needs. Case management was a significant need they found. He emphasized the need to get resources into the system and the need to act now.

Nitza Lopez-Castillo of Columbus Junction explained that she was looking to provide the best report for Iowans. For Ms. Lopez-Castillo, seeing the affected regions toured by the Commission makes her want to work harder and improve the state for future generations.

Bev Wharton of Sioux City co-chaired the Education Task Force. Wharton stated that she had been most impressed with the different sectors of education working together. Some good work has gone into the process of determining immediate needs. All Iowa communities are aware of the work of the Commission and Task Forces, and the Commission must plan for all of Iowa, making it a better and more dynamic state.

Jim Fausett, Mayor of Coralville and President of the Iowa League of Cities, co-chaired the Education Task Force with Wharton. Fausett commended Wharton for her leadership on the Task Force and stated that the Commission must remember that this is a state problem, not just a problem of Cedar Rapids and Des Moines that are larger communities. The Commission must remember that Iowa's smaller communities need to be taken care of, as well.

Carroll Reasoner, a lawyer practicing in Cedar Rapids for the past 32 years, explained that her experience has come from being at the epicenter of the Cedar Rapids floods. Reasoner noted that she was still amazed at the devastation of downtown Cedar Rapids. It is clear that the amount of damage is immense, and there exist gaps in federal funding available to rebuild. Reasoner stated that she would like the Commission to come up with creative ideas and act quickly to implement solutions.

Karris Golden of Waterloo stated that she works at Wartburg College in Waverly and also serves as a Commissioner on the Generation Iowa Commission. Golden noted that she agreed with what the other Commissioners had stated but wanted to add that as the Commission looks at recovery, the Commission must also be cognizant of how to rebuild better and how the state can recruit young professionals. Golden explained that as the Chair of the Cultural Heritage and Records Retention Task Force, it was important to her that the Commission support Iowa's cultural heritage institutions while focusing on rebuilding – that these institutions cannot be left behind.

McKeen explained that as the Commission spoke more in depth about its recommendations, each Commissioner would be asked which issues came to the top in the discussions of each Task Force. The Task Forces have been driven by Executive Order Seven in developing their reports. The Commission must have consensus on the stipulations outlined in Executive Order Seven. First the Commission must look at immediate needs, agree on damages, identify gaps, and prioritize its recommendations.

McKeen provided the Commission an overview of the process for achieving consensus on recommendations.

Discussion of Task Force Work and Outcomes

McKeen asked the Commission members to take some time to talk about what happened in each Task Force.

Long-term Recovery Planning

This Task Force looked less at the short-term and more on the long-term. The Task Force agreed that there may be an ability now with the disasters to rebuild better. Iowa learned from Hurricane Katrina and Louisiana that there may exist an immediate drive to put everything back where it was before the disaster, but Iowa really needs to be thinking long-term. It was really

hard to be able to put a report together to recommend what should be done long-term by September 2. The Commission needs to look at existing funds and explore ways to make the funds more available, like providing more flexibility over eligibility and caps. Someone asked if the state can give local communities some creative ways for funding projects.

A Commission member noted that there were definite overlaps between Task Forces and that the Commission is going to have to think about broad, over-arching issues.

A Commission member stated that counties are going to be strapped. Counties will be responsible for providing mental health services, for instance. For the counties most impacted, the implications will be very real.

A Commission member explained that a good discussion from the Long-Term Recovery Planning Task Force was the idea of having the state serve as a co-signer for local communities during this time of rebuilding. The state needs to get funding to communities.

Agriculture and Environment

Halling explained that compiling the draft report was difficult in that many of the issues discussed by the Task Force were hard to bring down to the short-term. Many of the Task Force's recommendations are long-term in scope. Since the Report was to focus on immediate needs, many Task Force members with long-term concerns did not see themselves in this 45-Day Report. There have been two different disasters – tornadoes and flooding. There is a large difference between the rebuilding after these events.

McKeen noted that, remarkably, more people are coming into Parkersburg and are building who did not live or work there before the tornado. The big issue is that tornado damage is covered by private insurance – flood damage is often not covered. This is an issue that has not really been discussed in many of the Task Forces.

A Commission member asked how the Commission could recreate what is happening in Parkersburg along the watershed.

Another Commission member noted that some people in Cedar Rapids had their cars covered for all hazards, but their homes were not. Disaster victims should not have to be lawyers to get all their insurance coverage questions asked and properly answered. There are so many exceptions – people should be able to buy insurance and have it cover everything. Many homes in Cedar Rapids were outside the 500-year floodplain.

A Commission member stated that the issue gets to the outdated mapping system in Iowa, and that many communities have not participated in the mapping.

A Commission member agreed that mapping would be a huge long-term issue and asked how the entire state can be mapped and hazard mitigation planning mandated.

A Commission member affirmed that other communities outside of Parkersburg were dealing with a lot more issues. Parkersburg has been easier to rebuild from, but the rebuilding is still frustrating – the Commission member noted that she would take a tornado over a flood any day.

McKeen explained that many people are asking themselves who should make the first move, whether to wait to make decisions, and are wondering if they should consider buy-outs. McKeen

asked the Commissioners how the state should move forward. There are some things the Commission cannot change, for instance, federal law.

A Commission member stated that he thought the Commission should not make recommendations to fit rules. The Commission should make recommendations and then have people change rules as they see necessary.

Another Commission member suggested the state create a recovery fund so that local communities could borrow money quickly.

A Commission member stated that timing really is everything now. The Commission can talk about Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), but many people are still fighting over rules, and nothing is happening.

A Commission member noted that the wealthy can move quickly and rebuild, and lower income people are waiting with no homes. The Commission member stated that the Commission needed to move on for those people.

Economic and Workforce Development

The Task Force does not have a handle on exact damages. There will be a lot of businesses that will not reopen, or some will reopen but their client base has gone elsewhere. The Task Force discussed big business versus small business. The bulk of Iowa's businesses that have been impacted are small businesses. These businesses already have debt they are carrying, so going to the Small Business Administration (SBA) is not a viable option for many of the businesses. The Commission keeps talking about cash. The state needs to get money and resources available to small businesses so they can start moving. The Task Force discussed the idea that the state create a forgivable loan program. Criteria would exist, so the program would not exactly be cash. Many cities' tax base has moved out – and many FEMA programs are based on local and state match. For some communities that is going to be hard.

Dave Miller, Administrator of Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management explained match requirements for FEMA programs. FEMA Individual Assistance mandates a 25% non-federal match. The Governor has asked for an increase in the federal portion. So far the state has been denied, except for a 90% allowance for some emergency activities. Iowa is still waiting for a response to the Governor's request for 100% funding. Iowa has already asked for the 90% funding portion for emergency infrastructure rebuilding – the state would make up the other 10% and the 15% local match would be forgiven. The Mitigation Assistance program is also a statutory 75% federal and 25% state and local cost-share. There is a local cost-share of 15%. You'll hear about this in local housing buy-outs. These are set by state statute. Miller explained that he hoped that Iowa would hear about the 90/10 cost-share within the next week. Miller noted that he was confident that Iowa will meet the \$122 per capita threshold that is required for the 90/10 cost-share.

Golden stated that cultural institutions are treated much like businesses, but do not have the resources small businesses have. Many of the staff may be volunteers, collections must be saved, and there is a difficulty in filling out paperwork correctly. These organizations are just meeting the threshold for being considered a non-profit entity. Some fall very far below that threshold. Golden stated that these organizations are vital to Iowa's communities and many small towns depend on these organizations for bringing tourists and in-state guests to their town. Some of these organizations are the life-blood of Iowa's communities – it is an economic development issue that Golden stated could not be forgotten in this project. Golden noted that

she was thankful that the concerns of cultural institutions and records management entities have been dealt with at the front end, not expected to be picked up at the end of the process.

Infrastructure and Transportation

King explained that he saw two issues – one related to his Task Force: that the state needs to let counties and cities know as soon as possible about the funding situation. Cities and counties want to know when the money is coming in. King explained that Union County will be proactive in this effort – the county will go out and bond for the next five years to get rebuilding done. The county needs bridges and other vital infrastructure. Counties will need to be proactive but careful not to go out on a limb. He asked about what happens if the counties or cities are not reimbursed.

A Commission member stated that he was very concerned about the resident who is not a property owner that works in a low to middle-income job in agriculture, another rural industry, or in town at the service station. Some landlords will not reinvest in some of their properties. Yes, they pay property taxes, but the state needs to make sure that a gap in the housing stock for people living day-to-day is not left wide open. The Commission member stated that he had read in several reports those communities' lower-assessed housing stock needs funding, as well.

McKeen recalled that the Coralville tour showed many multi-family homes had suffered severe damage. The tour leader told the Commission that they did not know if or when the home would be repaired.

A Commission member stated that he thought two Commission recommendations needed to be 1) the state needs to create a disaster fund, and 2) the state must ensure immediate disbursement by eliminating red tape, at least temporarily.

Another Commission member explained that it all came down to cutting through red tape and that many reports spoke of this. The Commission member stated that the Commission should include this as one of its main points. Counties, for instance, do not have the reserves to go out and rebuild themselves. Cities do not have the reserves, either.

McKeen asked Wharton if schools were under the same pressure. Wharton answered that as she listened to conversations statewide, it was evident that funds and resources should be available statewide. The Commission knows that communities across the state have been impacted, but now the state is focusing on a disaster of great magnitude. The Commission needs to make sure that as it develops recommendations, they need to be developed in a way that would allow Red Oak to access funds and resources tomorrow if necessary. Wharton explained that she was looking at more global and sustainable solutions.

McKeen asked Bywater how the state could get people to take on such dramatic behavior and societal changes. Bywater noted that he had recently heard that there was a small chance that the Legislature would reconvene in a special session this fall. Bywater suggested that the Commission make a recommendation for a special session and have them get on with it. A special session sends a message to the people of Iowa that the state is looking to make significant changes. A Commission member noted that bipartisanship is key in a special session. Everyone needs to come together to rebuild Iowa.

Another Commission member suggested that if the Commission did decide that a special session is a recommendation, then the Commission needed to give legislators a concise list of clear goals for the session. A Commission member stated that the Commission knows that

there are some things that need to be done now. The Commission does not need to be specific necessarily, but can tell the legislators what the Commission would do in their position.

Slater explained that the Commission does need to bring forth specifics to the Legislature to give them clear direction as to solving short-term and long-term needs. Slater asked the Commission what the Legislature needed to do immediately to move forward.

McKeen followed up Slater's question by asking how the Commission may seek to keep the pressure on the policymakers and leaders to make things happen. Slater explained that it was the Commission's responsibility to set its priorities in front of the community and the Legislature.

A Commission member suggested that the Commission recommend changes to state law that would allow local entities more flexibility of emergency funding to be able to borrow money quickly and for all emergency purposes.

Another Commission member stated that it was absolutely imperative that the Commission act now. Young people in transition are looking for other opportunities. These young professionals are already highly mobile and will not wait for FEMA. The state and the Commission cannot wait to take action. The Legislature needs to show that they are willing to put in the work and that they are ready to take up the charge. It is not the Commission's responsibility to tell them what to do.

McKeen explained that the Commission must make sure that everyone agrees that not all that is needed is short-term action. The Commission member stated that the clock was ticking.

A Commission member pointed the Commission to previous discussions with folks from Louisiana and Mississippi about their reports for recovery and rebuild. Their number one goal was to rebuild sustainably, but their first priority was to restore communities back to their original vitality. The second goal they outlined was sustainability, and the third was thinking regionally. Those folks recognized that they needed to act quickly. They worked under an 80-20 rule: hope that 80% of your decisions are right, and go back and fix the 20% that were wrong.

Review of Speak Up Iowa! Themes

Slater highlighted the findings from the Speak Up Iowa! public input sessions. Themes include expediting FEMA buy-outs, case management services, and providing mental health services, among others. A Speak Up Iowa! Report was provided to the RIAC along with the reports of the Task Forces.

A Commissioner noted that the Commission needed to be concerned about enforcing zoning laws and regulations. The state can do all this planning, but there has to be a willingness to enforce and go through with all the changes.

Another Commission member noted that there is an education process associated with changes in building. Parkersburg discussed rebuilding "green" but to rebuild quickly they could not truly rebuild "green." There needs to be education about what it means to rebuild in a green way.

A Commission member noted that he had a thought about Speak Up Iowa! as a program. As the state moves forward, Speak Up Iowa! may need to be reconsidered. He asked if the Commission should go out and talk to people. The state needs to make sure that the public has a real buy-in to this.

Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission Report to the Governor and Lt. Governor

Handout provided to the Commission: *45-Day Report to the Governor Draft Table of Contents.*

The Commission reviewed the suggested format and contents of the report. The draft table of contents addresses the requirements of Executive Order Seven. Keeping the requirements in mind as the Commission continues its discussion will aid in shaping the contents of the reports.

Review of Key Task Force Findings to the Commission

Damage Information

Handout provided to the Commission: *Damage Estimates Reported to the RIAC from Task Force Reports.*

McKeen warned that all damage estimates were incomplete and probably higher at this time than reported at the time of the Task Forces. Some damages may be covered by insurance, and others will not be covered. McKeen again warned that damage estimates are dynamic and ever-changing. McKeen asked the Commission to go through each Task Force's damage estimates and explain each in detail.

Agriculture and Environment Estimates

Halling stated that the estimates were self-explanatory. Many acres were inundated and production was lost. Cattle loss was minimal. It was a magnificent effort on the part of farmers to get animals out of effected areas. 40,000 or more head of cattle were saved. The damage to soil conservation is a huge number. Every year there is a certain amount of soil loss. Things the Commission will not see in the estimates are the many conservation practices that were successful. The Task Force chair stated that he wanted to be sure the Legislature knew that money spent on such practices works. People at the DNR ran the numbers for the parks. Water quality is a huge issue. Landfills will be an increasing problem as cleanup and rebuilding progress.

McKeen explained that how much trash and debris that is going to be created is not readily known yet. Transportation costs are an additional component. There is a cost involved in transferring these materials, and she asked who will be responsible for that cost.

A Commission member asked if the total agriculture estimate included corn and beans, and anything else. Slater explained that smaller crops, such as fruits and vegetables, were included in the total damage estimate, as well as small operations without crop insurance.

McKeen noted that details on all damage estimates were in each Task Force report.

Cultural Heritage and Records

Golden explained that the \$813 million total damage estimate is probably a very low number. The estimate was compiled by the Department of Cultural Affairs through a voluntary survey and individual phone calls. Unfortunately, without a statewide reporting system or mandatory reporting body for cultural affairs, there is no easy means to report damages. Much of the total number is seen in Cedar Rapids because the city had significant damages.

A Commission member stated that they were not sure where other small non-profits fell and which Task Force discussed non-profits. There did not seem to be one good, single category for non-profits. Not all non-profits are cultural organizations.

Golden explained further that some of the reporting organizations in Linn County were told to come back and report later. Records management entities are still in the middle of recovering documents, collections, and records. Now these organizations are coming back and saying that their damages are higher.

A Commission member noted that she felt the total damage estimate of \$813 million seemed high in comparison to other damage estimates, such as education damage estimates.

Golden explained that that number included all property that was lost including artifacts, collections, and books. Assessed values were used to come to the \$813 million damage estimate.

The Commission member further questioned the comparison with small businesses and noted that damage estimates to small businesses were lower than the cultural arts estimates.

Golden noted that the estimate included lost revenues as well as structural damage.

A Commission member stated that economic impact was not reflected in other damage estimates, so it was like comparing apples to oranges.

McKeen suggested that the Commission add a caveat to all damage estimates to include what the estimate reflects.

Slater noted that people and organizations recovering collections and records will have to pay staff to do the recovery work, so immediate cost should be reflected in damage estimates for records management.

Golden stated that many records were not recoverable at this point. There are losses that will not be able to be estimated because they will never be recovered.

Economic and Workforce Development

The economic and workforce development damage estimates are probably low, but as a snapshot they reflect accurate damage levels. The estimates are not complete, but are the best the Task Force could do.

Slater noted that the Commission must recognize job losses, as well.

Education

Wharton explained that the Task Force relied primarily upon the Iowa Department of Education for damage estimates. The Department did a good job of compiling information from school districts. Iowa State University did not sustain much damage. The most significantly affected private college was Coe. These numbers have not changed significantly since the Task Force met.

McKeen explained that of the K-12 public damages, Cedar Rapids represents \$30 million of the \$62 million total.

Wharton noted that student loss was yet to be determined. Students in Cedar Rapids have been displaced and relocated, and these losses have not been calculated as of today.

McKeen stated that there was some discussion of preschool programs at the Education Task Force, but no dollar impacts were identified with pre-K. There was an expectation by the Task Force that those programs be offered as scheduled.

Wharton explained that pre-K damage estimates were hard to determine. If the program was part of the public school district, the Task Force could estimate damages, but the Task Force could not assess private providers' impacts.

Housing

Davis explained that the housing damage estimates reflect unmet needs of the housing stock in communities and are based on Preliminary Damage Assessments.

Infrastructure and Transportation

Miller noted that the estimates reported by the Task Force are just estimates and that the anticipation is that they will go up. Additionally, the estimates only reflect projects that are eligible for reimbursement.

A Commission member noted that water and wastewater damage estimates are \$8.6 million as of today. This figure has been made available by Miller. Additionally, transportation estimates are probably low and are based primarily on private entities reporting to agencies. Much of the transportation damages are relatively commonplace.

Public Health

Larkin explained that 141 non-profits applied to FEMA for assistance. Larkin noted that she was unsure whether these non-profits represent just health care. A significant number of tetanus vaccines were distributed, and that has impacts on Public Health's ability to fund the upcoming need for flu vaccines.

Larkin noted that the hospital in Waverly served the public in that area after the disasters and now wants to be reimbursed. Public Health cannot reimburse all disaster-related services or expenses. The agency can only tell them "Thank you."

A Commission member stated that the Commission would be remiss if the members did not talk about things that went right during and after the disasters. A lot of people worked together to solve issues, and some agencies worked very well together.

A Commission member asked where churches or other community organizations fit into the Task Force damage assessments. A Commission member noted that their Task Force had discussed many non-profits.

Miller suggested that some of the damage to non-profits could be assessed by looking at FEMA Public Assistance. The 141 number represents only non-profits that sought Public Assistance (PA). As of today, August 25, 154 private non-profits have applied for PA. The true number will be hard to capture because these entities sometimes absorb the cost themselves, and a true assessment of damages is not complete without those organizations.

Slater asked the Commission to discuss the level of detail needed for the Commission's Report. He asked if it needs to be as detailed as the Task Force reports.

A Commission member stated that there has to be credibility to the numbers. When the Commission takes the process forward, there has to be some basis provided for justifying the

estimates. A Commission member suggested noting that the estimates are only the beginning of the assessment of damages and that the process of assessment is ongoing and not completely reliable.

A Commission member stated that Task Force numbers are not credible in that they are low and always changing. A Commission member suggested recognizing the dynamics of damage assessment, but that these numbers will be used to go forward with action.

A Commission member noted that his Task Force cited a date after each estimate given in the Task Force Report.

McKeen stated that the detail of the Task Force Reports is more than is necessary in the Commission Report. The Commission agreed that each damage estimate does not need to be detailed, but caveats need to be included about the preliminary nature of the estimates.

Issues, Priorities, and Gaps

McKeen asked the Commission to discuss the problems that they are trying to solve. Commission members listed the following:

- Taking care of people – both individually and collectively.
- Restoring a sense of order.
- Restoring public confidence that there will be a better tomorrow. That they will get their jobs back and that help is on the way.
- Restoring public confidence in local water quality. People are asking if they can go boating and if they can eat the fish they catch.
- Information to people quickly. People need information on public health and water quality, but also need help navigating all the programs with all the different agencies.
- Immediate housing needs.
- How do we prevent this from happening again? Mitigating risks.
- Comprehensive planning.
- Immediate needs for small business.
- Identifying funding sources for the gaps across all timelines and flexibility of funding as a priority.
- Need to address the flaws in the notification systems and flood measurement system accuracy.
- Keeping people safe.
- Updated floodplain mapping and maintaining accuracy.
- Levees.

- Statewide planning for floodplain management and watershed mitigation.
- Replacement housing – Iowa needs to rebuild inhabitable housing. This may include incentivizing market forces and finding ways to rebuild smarter.
- No consistency in hazard mitigation across the state – for example, school districts must be integrated into community-wide plans.
- Incentives for equitable hazard mitigation programs and planning.
- Incentives for relocating outside floodplains regarding public buildings and housing. This would remain through local government, but needs to be addressed.

A Commission member asked the group to discuss if the Commission wants to go as far as overstepping home rule.

Slater asked the Commission if the state should keep giving local entities or individuals' money if building keeps progressing on floodplains.

A Commission member questioned whether the federal government already uses this restriction.

Miller explained to the Commission that it is one thing to talk about doing mitigation now, and to what level – the 100-year or 500-year – but some entities planned before the recent disasters and were flooded still. What should the state allow? When one builds a levee, chances are that the levee will eventually be breached. So does the locality or the state allow building behind the levee as a protected area?

A Commission member noted that then the question lies in maintaining levees and asked to what standards they are maintained.

A Commission member stated that if people choose to build in flood zones they should be out on their own.

Slater noted that at least two Task Forces laid down the basic recommendation of completing accurate floodplain mapping of the state.

A Commission member noted that many other Task Forces would have recommended mapping, as well, but were told that mapping was not in their areas of focus.

A Commission member warned that restricting development is a two-edged sword. If the state gets maps completed, local authorities may be required to go to zoning. People located within the floodplains will have to pay flood insurance because it is considered a high-risk area.

A Commission member noted that the state must understand the difference between the disasters of 2008 and those of 1993. The state really needs to understand what has changed in that corridor over the past 15 years. The state needs maps and then needs to look into how to speed or slow the water down. A lot of the tributaries could be managed better. Another question is how much concrete has been poured or how many rooftops have been constructed in this area.

A Commission member stated that regardless of whether the state or localities allow people to go into flood areas, the state cannot protect itself totally from disasters. The state must decide to what level to set standards. In Iowa City there was an area where condominiums were built one foot above the floodplain. The Commission member stated that there is reluctance to mandating people not to develop within the 500-year floodplain.

A Commission member noted that the Coralville Reservoir was built for flood control fifty years ago. Maybe the long-term issue is maintaining it so it can do a better job.

A Commission member stated that it was most likely built for flood control.

A Commission member stressed that there are certain things that must be done right away. Then there are certain things that can be included in the report due in October. Then there are some things that we will never be able to do. The Commission and state must set priorities immediately and be reasonable.

McKeen asked the Commission to identify the most immediate needs.

A Commission member suggested housing as an immediate need. Everyone understands that people initially need transitional housing. There is also the FEMA Rental Repair Program that repairs other vacant housing in the community to habitable conditions for use as temporary housing for displaced flood victims.

A Commission member explained that the Rental Repair Program is for apartment and large-scale housing, not necessarily for the average person looking to repair his single-family home, and the owner must rent the property back to FEMA to serve as temporary housing.

A Commission member clarified that these options reflect immediate needs that must be tackled before winter.

McKeen noted that many people are living with family and in need of temporary housing. Family dynamics come into play, so what better time to get out of there than when school starts?

Slater asked the Commission to confirm that housing is an absolute immediate need.

A Commission member confirmed housing as an immediate need, but also suggested case management as another immediate need. Case management is so much broader than housing issues. It is just as important as housing.

Review of Task Force Recommendations to the Commission

Handout to Commission: *Summary of Recommendations to the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission from the Nine Task Force Reports.*

McKeen explained that many common elements came out of the Task Force recommendations. Only a few elements were mentioned at only one or two Task Forces.

Slater noted that the chart on the handout was not created to score the different elements. The chart should be used to inform further discussions of the Commission's recommendations.

Slater asked if any Commission member was surprised by the common elements presented in the handout.

A Commission member noted that the area of funding and incentives is a concern of most of the Task Force Reports. The Education Task Force heard about a school district working to find interim financing. The Task Force recognized that there are some districts that do not have this capacity. The Commission member stated that she did not recommend giving entities money with no restrictions or limits, but that local entities need an accessible funding stream for immediate recovery needs. Is there some type of assistance the state could put into place, or a loan program for certain entities meeting specific criteria? There needs to be a way to get organizations the resources needed right now. The state must be responsible with public resources, but if there are some funds tied up right now due to certain restrictions, the state should research how to make those available to who needs it for immediate recovery.

McKeen noted that funding and incentives are often brought forward as solutions to some of the other issues identified, such as state data gathering. Funding is usually coupled with some of the other themes. Not everyone just wants money, but they have specific needs that need to be met.

A Commission member suggested creating incentives to building better or improving infrastructure.

Identification of Preliminary Priorities

McKeen noted that the recommendations of the Task Forces should not be forgotten.

A Commission member stated that he supported rolling back the sales tax from recovery efforts for small businesses, but that it should apply beyond infrastructure to all flood-affected businesses and industries.

A Commission member asked if individual homeowners should be eligible for the sales tax forgiveness.

A Commission member stated that they would not be opposed to individual homeowners being eligible, as well.

A Commission member noted that sales tax forgiveness was discussed in their Task Force, as well as the re-introduction of Enterprise Zones. The legislature would have to revise eligibility criteria for these zones.

Slater suggested that a recommendation may include researching different funding options. A Commission member commented that the idea is based in diverse funding options and researching diverse financing options for entities.

A Commission member noted that their Task Force was emphatic about getting assistance to small businesses immediately with certain criteria, but perhaps in the form of forgivable loans. Small businesses do not need any more loans that they must repay.

Another Commission member stated that she would like to see the Commission recommend case managers out in the field that will look at the whole person, and have some emergency medical and mental health training, so case management is not directed just at housing or financial stability.

Slater added that businesses should be informed of what is available, as well. Slater asked the Commission if this needed to be included as a comprehensive recommendation.

McKeen noted that Task Forces had heard that people needed help filling out forms, people needed help with mental health issues, or concerns about their kids, job training and retraining. McKeen suggested crafting a recommendation that would include all these components that would build on an existing program or infrastructure with some augmentation.

A Commission member noted that the Commission needed to build public confidence.

A Commission member suggested that the 10% local match be addressed.

A Commission member noted that the Housing Task Force identified a state affordable housing tax credit and expansion of Enterprise Zones as suggestions in their report. The Task Force also identified gap funding. The state needs to get land available, produce the housing, and find people to buy the homes.

A Commission member suggested that most of the Task Forces identified gap financing as an issue.

McKeen noted that gap should be thought of as funding to make up for differences that will never be available through existing programs for some of these priorities. This gives lawmakers enough information to direct them to the needs that will be met through gap financing options, for instance.

A Commission member suggested waiving penalties for delinquent property taxes. The thought is to let the counties have the option of doing that. A Commission member questioned if Code currently allows county supervisors the ability to do this in the time of a disaster. The Commission member suggested enhancing county trust funds, such as utilizing matching monies and EDA funds for match. The structure exists to distribute such funds.

A Commission member stated the need for floodplain mapping.

McKeen noted that the Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation Task Force had been informed that \$15 million was needed to finish the mapping and that it could be completed over the next 10 years. How does the state ensure that this is done in a timely fashion?

A Commission member noted that the issue is not just completing the mapping, but that it must be accurate, as well. Eighteen months is a realistic timeline for mapping the state.

A Commission member noted that LiDAR had been discussed. The Department of Natural Resources and others have been working with LiDAR, but maybe there are other technologies.

Miller explained that LiDAR is discussed often because a substantial investment in LiDAR mapping of the state has been made. Half the state has already been mapped with LiDAR. It is now an issue of finishing the mapping.

A Commission member suggested the state assess its role in hazard mitigation and floodplain management. Should the state mandate a zoning plan in each county?

A Commission member noted that it is not necessary for the Commission to reinvent the wheel, but the information must be utilized in a different way. The Agriculture and Environment Task Force identified the need to create a cost-share program to develop a cover crop program. By putting a cover crop on some lands, it holds nutrients in the soil and provides cover to wildlife.

A Commission member suggested providing more air and water quality information and temporarily expanding the capacity of the DNR to allow them to provide this information more readily and proactively.

A Commission member noted that cities, counties, and schools may like the ability to extend shortened timelines for public bidding in emergency situations.

A Commission member asked the group what they could do to expedite the flow of funds coming to communities, through CDBG funds or other funding mechanisms. A suggestion may be to waive restrictions on certain funds that may be used for recovery and rebuilding. Some of these funds were never considered to be used in times of emergency. An additional suggestion was to extend emergency natural disaster loan repayment past the first year (Chapter 384).

A Commission member suggested that the state serve as guarantor on bonds issued by cities and counties.

A Commission member suggested creating an “evergreen fund” that would allow immediate borrowing by local public entities in times of emergency.

A Commission member stated that this was another example of interim financing.

A Commission member suggested that the state delay capital expenditures and divert that funding to recovery.

Another Commission member suggested creating a small business disaster fund. There is no safety net for small businesses.

A Commission member suggested the state look at ways to allow flexibility in existing funding options, such as the Values Fund. The Commission member noted that local match requirements often break small communities.

A Commission member stated that the Commission needed to recommend funding for vaccinations for the fall.

A Commission member noted the gap that will exist between property tax collection and the immediate needs of some communities. The state should create a fund that will carry the communities through this temporary cash flow problem.

Miller explained that people were concerned that communities did not have the capacity to re-assess properties damaged by the storms. Communities do not have the capacity to re-assess homes so homeowners have to pay the last assessment of their home’s value, not an assessment of a damaged home.

A Commission member noted that the county assessor in many communities is asked if people have to pay property tax on homes that have been destroyed. The assessor has to explain to people that property taxes fund schools and other community services.

Miller explained that, beyond capacity issues, the cost for re-assessment is not covered by FEMA.

A Commission member explained that properties are re-assessed every two years. When homeowners in these areas eventually come to assessors' offices and ask the assessor to re-assess homes at lower rates, there are not going to be enough people to do those assessments.

A Commission member explained that this situation comes up all the time with homes that have burned down. Homeowners pay the higher assessed value until there is a new home. There will not be enough people to perform all the assessments of damaged property. They would need to hire an entity to do this.

McKeen suggested that Commission may want to make a more general recommendation for additional research into this issue. The issue should at least be acknowledged because it will come out later.

Closing Comments

Major General Dardis thanked the Commission members for their time and adjourned the meeting until 8:00 am Tuesday.

August 26, 2008 – 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Recap of Previous Session

Major General Ron Dardis greeted the group, thanked the Commission for their participation, and expressed appreciation to McKeen and Slater for their work with the group on Monday. This morning, Dardis noted, the job is to look at the unmet needs for business and communities. We need to agree on recommendations on how to fill those unmet needs. The report can be compelling to spur action to meet those needs. We have a good discussion on the recommendations discussed yesterday.

From yesterday, some clarifications can be added. Budget review is underway; the Governor asked state agencies to conduct that right away. The initial budget review has been completed, and some funding has been redirected. The Governor has already taken some steps to realign opportunities through waivers and other items that the Governor has capacity to make decisions upon. Dardis noted that there will need to be a more strategic look to the road ahead after the completion of the forty-five day report concerning the long term. He also made announcements regarding housekeeping items for paperwork and other requirements for Commission members.

General Dardis asked David Miller to provide an overview of the Individual Assistance, Assistance to Individuals and Families, and the Other Needs Assistance programs. Miller explained that grants for reimbursements for loss of personal property are administered through the Iowa Department of Human Services when a Governor's declaration is issued in a county. Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management personnel and the Department of Human Services are anticipating the money that is needed, and the Executive Council has obligated some funds already for the state program. If a county is initially or later declared a Presidential Disaster Area, those residents applying for Individual Assistance do so to FEMA under the federal program, which overall provides greater benefits to individuals and families than Iowa's program. Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management is in charge of

administration for the Public Assistance and Mitigation Program, which will commence later in the process. Pat Hall, Iowa's State Coordinating Officer for this disaster, outlined how the Public Assistance program works. This program assists the repair for public entities like county, state, and local governments and certain Private Non Profit organizations. The first step in the Public Assistance process is writing up a Project Worksheet, which serves as a grant scope of work. He mentioned that any project expected to cost greater than \$60,900 is considered a large project. On large projects, the federal share is paid as the project is completed. On a small project, the federal share is advanced. The obligation process is very simple. After the project worksheet is approved, the federal share is drawn down through a computer system called Smartlink, and then the state share is obligated by the Executive Council. Currently, Iowa is at 75 percent federal, 15 percent local, and 10 percent state share. The federal share, for small projects, it is paid as the project worksheet is approved. Currently, the regulation in place calls for the 75 percent-25 percent cost share. When the state reaches eligible damages equal to \$122 per capita, the state becomes eligible for the 90 percent-10 percent cost share.

Currently, the state is trying to encourage the federal government to obligate the money quickly. Once there is \$122 per capita, it is a retro-active cost share. Miller noted that the \$122 is based not on estimates, but on obligated funds. He said that there is little doubt that the state of Iowa will get to \$122, but it may take time. Hall reminded the group to keep in mind that this information applies strictly to the Public Assistance Program. Miller noted that the Contingency Loan Fund, which is under the jurisdiction of the Executive Council, is \$1 million. No communities have yet applied for a contingency loan for this fiscal year. Hall mentioned that \$90 million has been processed for public assistance to this date.

McKeen thanked Hall and Miller for their comments and the context that it added to the discussion. She reminded the group that the job that they are here to do today is to decide what will go into the Commission Report. Slater noted that he has heard that the group would like the report to be compelling and he encouraged the group to think about the longevity of the report's ideas. McKeen discussed that Iowans did not have a lot of places to turn in regard to the disasters, and encouraged the group to remember that other states will look to these recommendations for their own assistance at some future time, and that this will be a historic document, which will serve as record of Iowa history and also recognizes the historic involvement of Iowans through the Task Forces.

A Commission member asked about the property tax discussion from Monday. These valuations will apply to the future, but asked if there a belief that people will default on their current property taxes. A Commission member agreed that there certainly will be more issues with fulfilling property tax obligations. Another added that that people will have tax payments on houses that are no longer there, and the houses that are being built in their place are better and will have a higher taxable value. New Hartford has a bond issue for schools, and there are major concerns about having the appropriate tax base to fulfill those bonds. A Commission member added that there was already a foreclosure crisis before the disasters, and now it has made it even more difficult.

Slater introduced Mary Jane Olney, Deputy Director of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. She shared updated information about the projected damages for cultural institutions in Iowa that had been discussed Monday afternoon. Those projections listed in the damage report did not subtract insurance and Federal Emergency Management Agency payments, and it had also accounted for lost ticket sales and revenue. She announced that new numbers are being gathered today. This will put cultural heritage more in line with damages from other sections of interest, based on known damages.

Commission Report Discussion and Deliberation

The group turned to discussion of specific content for the report, giving staff guidance on what should be included, its tone, and specificity. McKeen asked the group about the section describing data on damage, keeping in mind that the damage estimates are constantly changing and the completion date is not known. She also discussed the possibility of approaching each area with information about the dynamic nature of the damage estimates and that the numbers are not all-inclusive. A Commission member recognized that there is a constituency behind each of the types of projected costs and there may be difficulty identifying the different needs. The Commission members agreed that the way that the damages were described in the handout shared on Monday is appropriate for the Report.

A Commission member asked about the mechanics of receiving the Commission Report. It is estimated that the document will be shared via email with the group by Thursday night.

McKeen also outlined the Priority Issues and Gaps sections that will be included in the report. One such priority and gap is the small business and business need for bridge funding and the need for there to be some interim financing to allow local governments, businesses, schools, and, in some cases, individuals to afford what they need to do right away. She recognized that these sections will appear similar to the Task Force reports. A Commission member recognized that the Commission did not talk about every single issue that the Task Force Reports recognized, which should be included in the report, but the recommendations from the Task Force Reports may be included in the Commission Report.

A Commission member recognized the importance of making sure that the legislature recognizes the significance of people in the rebuilding process. A Commission member recognized that not all of the individual Task Force recommendations are reflected through the discussion on Monday, examples being long-term air quality monitoring and mental health needs.

Slater recognized that many of these items are concerns of multiple Task Forces, and it is important to try to take a holistic look at an issue area. A Commission member agreed, noting that through the discussion and immediate priorities were addressed, many Task Forces had similar overarching recommendations. The strategies under each recommendation can address individual topical areas of concern, while the larger recommendation can be categorical. A Commission member mentioned the importance of communicating through the state on what the Commission is doing and restoring public confidence is an important part of the Commission's work.

A Commission member noted that although there are multiple concerns, there needs to be a limited number of recommendations and they need to be very specifically calling for action. The group agreed. Slater noted that specific issues calling for action is what makes these recommendations compelling.

The Commission developed a list of Recommendations based on the discussion:

- Case management
- Mental health
- Public health service delivery – flu vaccine for the fall & surveillance in key areas
- Emergency planning – libraries ensure Internet capacity

- Communications and outreach – economic development, workforce, education
- Housing – Immediate needs and longer term needs for replacement and affordability
- Funding mechanisms for cash flow alleviation for communities
- Small business incentives for reconstruction
 - Sales tax relief
 - Tax credits
 - Forgivable loan program
- State payment of 10 percent (of adjusted federal/nonfederal ratio) for public assistance by state statute
- Mitigation funding 10 percent state share; 15 percent local share is a gap; cannot be waived unless by Congress
- Gap funding for housing – providers and individuals
- Waiving penalties for delinquent property taxes creates gaps for counties in revenues needed to continue to provide services
- Housing trust funds receive additional funds
- Floodplain mapping completed
- Determine state's role in floodplain and watershed management
- Evergreen fund permanently established – available to cities, counties, schools to be used as gap funding in times and areas of declared disaster
- State agency budget review and shift funds to recovery; include capital funds
- Increase flexibility in use of available funds – waivers, etc.
- Enterprise Zones – expanding for housing and business. Expand within counties; review to identify whether some additional counties may now qualify.
- Gap in local revenue from reduced property value; from the resident perspective, property reassessments need to be completed
- Cost-share program for cover crop planting to protect soil in disaster-affected bare ground
- Improve water quality monitoring – gap in DNR capacity
- Disaster regulations for expedited bid-letting and reconstruction on emergency basis.
- Emergency basis – local bond referendum changed to 50 percent +1
- Expedite flow of federal funds to the state and to the local levels
- State issued guarantees for qualifying local obligations
- Chapter 384 – expand repayment period to minimum of five years (currently one year)
- Support integrated planning in regions; the state should take the lead in floodplain management
- “Iowa is open and welcoming”

Slater recapped the discussion of priorities from Monday:

- Immediate needs for housing include transitional and longer-term needs.
- It is necessary to design a funding mechanism plan for the state to help communities in a responsible manner. It will be important to create a way to help communities to use the bonding capacity or credit of the state to transition and assist communities in rebuilding quickly and to assist with cash flow.
- Small business incentives were also recognized as important. Sales tax relief for reconstruction on devastated areas to alleviate cost on supplies, tax credits (housing and other areas), small business forgivable loan program (pooling Department of Economic Development funds) for small businesses and non-profit organizations.
- Supplanting funds to pay the Federal Emergency Management Agency match for communities was also discussed. Miller clarified that the state cannot ask for a waiver for

the state costs for the Individual Assistance Program, unless Congress takes action on this item. By Iowa Law, the state shall pay no more than 10 percent for rebuilding efforts; and the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management is asking FEMA to adjust their cost share to 90 percent and the state would eliminate the local government share. In the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, a separate program from Individual Assistance, when mitigation projects begin, it is 75 percent federal; the state cannot by statute pay more than 10 percent, leaving 15 percent to be paid by the local government. The federal government cannot adjust mitigation cost share. One use for mitigation funds is buying out homes in the floodplain. The state has used available Community Development Block Grant funding in the past to match federal share, but that has not become available or its use determined at this point. This is a recognized gap that needs to be satisfied, as it does affect the state and could affect individual citizens. Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management conducts property acquisition, and the process takes a bit longer. They ask how many communities are interested in the program and then they decide by cost benefit analysis how many homes that they can buy. The amount of money that Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management gets from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for hazard mitigation is an amount of 20% of the Stafford Act-related cost on the federal side. The estimates may be over \$1 billion, and that would translate into \$200 million for Iowa to spend on hazard mitigation, and that money has to be matched. He encouraged the group to keep in mind that this is strictly a supposition. If the state has available Community Development Block Grant money, there is a lot of opportunity to help small businesses and the use of that money may need consideration.

- A Commission member encouraged the group to have a different ratio of allocations than in 1993. Slater asked the group if it is the best use of the Commission's time to make those decisions when there is still work being done in Congress on this issue and final decisions have not been made.
 - Dardis encouraged the group to consider that there may be a need for the Commission to provide input, there are discussions happening right now. When the Commission releases its report, it will assist in showing priorities.
 - A Commission Member asked for information about what the Community Development Block Grant money can be used for. This funding stream is one of the most flexible, which is why there is such great interest in it. After all, it is one of the only federal streams of funding that can be used to match federal dollars. Miller noted that under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program buy-out rules, the bought-out lands are deed restricted, and the land will become green space.
- Gap funding for housing was discussed at length the previous afternoon.
- Waiving penalties for delinquent property taxes by counties is also an item that has been discussed at length. The group discussed that there may already be an ability by counties to do this. A Commission member asserted that county services still need to be delivered, such as public safety, veterans, mental health, and transportation. If taxes are waived, this may cause trouble in providing these services. Slater noted that the recommendation concentrates on providing local governments with flexibility in raising revenue, which may encompass many types of opportunities.
- Seeding housing trust funds in counties with additional funds to assist in repair and rebuilding was also a top priority.
- Floodplain mapping for the state, to keep up intensity on the issue of floodplain work was discussed at length by Commission. By the end of the discussion, it was agreed that this is an immediate recommendation.

- Creating a back-up system to ensure internet access around the state during times of disaster was noted as a top priority.
- Creation of an “Evergreen Fund” for reserve funding for schools and other local governments that are affected to use for transitional dollars to help them through process required through the law was suggested and supported by Commission members.
- Providing flexibility for budget review by agencies, cities and counties, creating realignment for capital projects. A Commission member added that a waiving of requirements for the use of funds is an important part of allowing for that flexibility. McKeen noted that for the purposes of the Commission, the message needs to be sent that it is important to do business as usual with current funds by adding additional flexibility, and that all items discussed need examination.
- Small Business Disaster Funds. A possible solution to assisting small business is expanding Enterprise Zones using existing regulations or modified criteria, expand within counties and add additional counties. A Commission member noted that these are a great incentive for developers.
- Expanding public health services like the flu vaccine that has been compromised by expenditure of those resources on disaster recovery. Public health surveillance is also extremely important as it works with water quality surveillance.
- Allowing properties to be re-assessed, adjusting property tax revenues. A Commission member noted that this gap in property tax revenue that will need to be subsidized by the state. It is important to keep in mind that every time a tax is forgiven, another entity is going to have to make it up. Slater said it is important to remember that it is impossible to make everyone “whole,” but the state can take steps to support people. McKeen added that it is up to the Commission to set priorities on what areas will be priorities to try to help people become more “whole.”
- A cost share program to protect soil on bare ground. A Commission member mentioned that this assists with mitigating erosion and assisting in appropriate yields in the years ahead. There needs to be an incentive to participate in this program. This is a very critical message for the state.
- Temporarily expand the Department of Natural Resources capacity for gathering and monitoring water quality information. It is important to get more information from water and soil samples. A Commission member noted that many wastewater treatment plants are also not running at capacity and will need considerations and assistance.
- Local governments should be able to use special expedited bid-letting procedures under circumstances of a Presidentially-declared disaster in the county.
- Reduce the required majority to pass a bond referendum in areas under a Presidential Disaster Declaration. Right now, if you are going to pass a bond referendum in county or school district, you currently need a 60 percent majority. It was recommended change the margin for passage to 50 percent plus 1.
- Expedite flow of federal funds to cities and counties.
- Have the state issue a letter of credit or be the guarantor of funds to borrow at a lower interest rate on the credit of the state. This is a detailed example of flexibility of state assistance.
- Chapter 384 expansion to 5 years or longer.

McKeen asked the Commission members about integrated planning. Slater noted that some may have concerns that groups may lose their own identity, and those concerns should be addressed. The group agreed that integrated planning through incentives from the state should be recommended. The Commission also recognized that the state should take the lead in some

areas, including floodplain management. It was agreed that this leadership will be challenging due to home-rule. One Commission member recognized that making these changes will take bold steps and those steps should be taken. Another Commission member noted that some leaders may be so concerned about home-rule that they may avoid assistance and participation. A Commission member noted that incentives often assist with making that easier. Other areas where state leadership was discussed for inclusion in the Report included zoning, land use, and building codes. McKeen recognized that as the recommendations are put together, it will be necessary to state a recommendation that is general and straightforward and then follow up with suggested action items from the Commission on how the recommendation might be implemented.

A Commission member recognized that planning support can come from a variety of areas, and it may be that the state could assist with facilitating local areas access help through a variety of areas. McKeen asked if there are places where the state needs to step back. A Commission member noted the importance of balance, and the state should make available support and recognize that communities are very different, and may ask for different types of needs. A Commission member suggested the importance of recognizing that damages are a moving figure, and there needs to be a small number of recommendations that are prioritized.

Another Commission member recognized the importance of assisting local government in meeting their responsibilities. Another Commission member recognized taking the opportunity to keep people in the state and bring new people to the state. A Commission member encouraged the group to break down the recommendations discussed to include only the immediate recommendations, as this is a 45-day report.

The group took a short break.

Slater brought the group back together at 10:40 am, after he and McKeen had realigned the recommendations into immediate needs and longer-term needs.

He noted the following order of recommendations:

- Case management
- Mental health
- Public health service delivery – flu vaccine & surveillance
- Emergency planning – libraries Internet back-up
- Communications and outreach – economic development, workforce, education
- Housing – Immediate needs and longer term needs for replacement and affordability
- Funding mechanisms – cash flow alleviation for communities
- Small business incentives for reconstruction
 - Sales tax relief
 - Tax credits
 - Forgivable loan program
- State payment of 10% (of adjusted federal/nonfederal ratio) for public assistance by state statute
- Mitigation funding 10% state share; 15% local share is a gap; cannot be waived unless by Congress
- Gap funding for housing – providers and individuals
- Waiving penalties for delinquent property taxes – gaps for counties in needing to continue to provide services
- Housing trust funds receive additional funds

- Floodplain mapping completed
- Determine state's role in floodplain and watershed management
- Evergreen Fund permanently established – available to cities, counties, schools to be used as gap funding
- State agency budget review and shift funds to recovery; include capital funds
- Increase flexibility in use of available funds – waivers, etc.
- Enterprise Zones – expanding for housing and business. Expand within counties; review to identify whether some additional counties may now qualify.
- Gap in local revenue from reduced property value; on resident perspective property reassessments need to be completed
- Cost-share program for cover crop planting to protect soil in disaster-affected bare ground. Fallow syndrome.
- Improve water quality monitoring – gap in DNR capacity
- Disaster regulations for expedited bid-letting and reconstruction on emergency basis.
- Emergency basis – local bond referendum to 50% +1
- Expedite flow of federal to state to local levels
- State could issue guarantees for qualifying local obligations.
- Chapter 384 – expand repayment period to minimum of five years (currently one year)
- Support integrated planning in regions; and in state should take lead in flood plain management
- “Iowa is open and welcoming”

The group then discussed each item individually to determine if the recommendations were immediate or long-term, and how items might be collapsed as part of or action items related to a more general recommendation.

Case Management, Housing, and Small Business assistance were identified as immediate needs. Floodplain management was also recognized by the Commission members as an important need.

The various funding priorities and flexibility issues are immediate needs, but some will take a longer time to implement. McKeen noted that the content of the Task Force Reports will help define and provide important information about some recommendations for the report.

Broader themes of planning and public health services can be stated as recommendations with action items from this list included. There will also be some narrative language included with each recommendation that provides context and the thinking of the Commission.

The group discussed the importance of recognizing the frustration felt by local and state levels with the slow decisions of federal programs. Dave Miller explained how the state approaches payments of the state share to ensure the state remains in compliance with the law. Miller noted that the state statute requires that the state will not pay over 10 percent, which is why the state often pays last. There is some discussion that if the state pays in advance, that it may hurry the program along, but has implications for project eligibility and future availability of project funds. However, cash advances for the federal share and other opportunities to expedite funds are being considered and investigated. A Commission member noted the importance of expediting federal funds whenever possible. A Commission member also suggested ways to adjust the process to not violate the statute, but adjust the management of processing funds to make sure that the state does not end up paying over 10 percent overall.

Miller asked the group to consider the situation where communities have advanced funding and then depending on the situation, risk compromising federal reimbursement. Miller also noted that there are other tools used in the planning process for some pieces of the system. Especially in terms of the mitigation portion of the approval process, there are abilities to expedite processes, even those that do not involve funding. Members discussed the importance of making sure that the state is doing everything it can within the rules of Iowa law. Miller added that the Governor and Department leaders have used their ability to institute waivers that allowed the state to recover quicker and meet lowans' needs. He suggested a review of waivers that were issued and what may need to be issued for a future disaster to help standardize these options practices.

A Commission member asked if floodplain mapping is an immediate need, especially given the concerns about housing, small business, and others. Bywater recognized that the Floodplain Management and Hazard Mitigation Task Force indicated that the concern is that if the floodplain issue does not get addressed immediately, it may not happen. The group agreed, after much discussion regarding floodplain management's inclusion in the 45-day report, that this issue should not be forgotten.

A Commission member added that the cultural heritage portion of the recommendations may not be immediate, aside from those that are also considered under program rules to be eligible for small business assistance. Those cultural entities that do fit the small business criteria would be covered through the immediate small business recommendations. Slater noted that in terms of the report, the value of cultural institutions would not be forgotten; rather recommendations would be a greater focus for the 120-day report concerning the quality of life. An example shared by a Commission member was that a 120-year old suspension bridge was an important historical landmark and will be put back up, but not with the same urgency that housing and business will be given in the 45-day report.

The group discussed the necessity to repair houses and to be clear about that in the recommendations. McKeen recognized that those detailed recommendations can be brought forward from the Housing Task Force Report.

The group also noted some additional recommendations from the Task Force Report to bring into the report include a state affordability tax credit, gap funding, and adaptations to the criteria covering Enterprise Zones. The group also recognized the need for immediate transitional housing opportunities.

McKeen and Slater also outlined how each themed grouping of overarching recommendations include a number of specific recommendations within it, and that funding recommendations have items that encompass suggestions from many of the Task Force topical areas. McKeen also noted that the funding options should apply to communities, small businesses, nonprofits, and individuals as details are added under each section of the recommendations. A Commission member noted the need for direct infusion of cash to affected individuals. McKeen noted that some ideas are listed under the funding options list may apply to assistance to individuals and communities.

A Commission member discussed the necessity of a legislative change for an abatement or forgiveness of property taxes. The possibility of penalty forgiveness was suggested, and details involving regulatory expansion will need to be considered in the future.

The group discussed that public health recommendations may also be able to fit under case management the same way that details from other Task Forces will be included. Some recognized that public health functions statutorily separately at the state and local level. Miller noted that comprehensive case management should be encouraged to share all of the data among agencies and interests. Others recognized that case management and public health function differently, especially at the county level. A Commission member recognized that current case management needs additional oversight, and as this is expanded, it is important that proper oversight is included in the implementation.

McKeen asked the group to come to consensus about how the recommendations will appear in the Report. Slater recommended a few paragraphs in the beginning creating context and highlighting issues and priority areas. Then, a compelling case needs to be made about what the Commission expects in order to be able to meet the needs identified, followed by details. McKeen added that including why these are important, what needs to be done, and what would be required of those charged with implementing these recommendations. She also noted that longer-term and ongoing items will also be addressed briefly, foreshadowing the priorities of the 125-Day Report. A Commission member noted that it is important that the Commission has a chance to review the report to make sure that it is a compelling, consistent plan of action. A Commission member noted that the approach outlined seems very reasonable, and it is time to see the document and go from there

A Commission member recognized that an immediate need regarding floodplain mapping is that funding gets set aside immediately. Commission members recognized the risk of not including this as a recommendation. A Commission member also noted that review of an after-action report describing what went wrong would also be appropriate as part of the Commission's future activities.

A Commission member recognized the need for asking the Governor to call the legislature back for special session. Another Commission member replied that this may be out of the purview of the Commission to discuss the requirements of the Governor requiring a special legislative session. Commission members agreed that it is the Governor's decision to choose a course of action based upon the Report's compelling recommendations.

Final Comments and Closing Remarks

Major General Dardis recognized that the Commission members will need to review the document and will need to review the document and discuss over conference call. The group agreed that 4:00 pm on Friday, August 29, 2008 would be an appropriate time for a conference call to discuss the draft report.

Dardis thanked McKeen and Slater for their facilitation. He noted that there are no more meetings scheduled currently, and that in the future, the schedule will be less taxing as the Commission works to focus on more long-term planning items. He added that the 120-day report will be due in November, and it will not be as intense of a process as it was for the first forty-five days. He discussed that central locations for meetings is probably the best in terms of planning. He indicated that future planning and tasking will be discussed and information shared as appropriate. He added that different views and opinions are strength of the Commission. He thanked each member of the group for their personal sacrifice in meeting the intense meeting schedule and time commitment to serve on this Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.